

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 NEA-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 FEA-02 EB-11 COME-00 TRSE-00

INT-08 SCI-06 DRC-01 IO-14 EURE-00 /167 W

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P 301630Z JAN 74

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5194

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

USINT CAIRO PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MANAMA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 0190

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ENGR, PFOR, MT, EG, SA, KULY, BA

SUBJ: ENERGY : MINTOFF SWING AROUND MIDDLE EAST

REF: VALETTA 182 (NOTAL)

1. ITALIAN AMBASSADOR MASSA BERNUCCI CONFIRMS THAT
MINTOFF, ACCCOMPANIED BY SMALL DELEGATION, WILL DEPART
MALTA JAN 31 AND AFTER TRANSITING ROME WILL VISIT CAIRO,
SAUDI ARABIA, KUWAIT, BAHRAIN. EXCEPT FOR CAIRO,
MAIN PURPOSE OF MIDDLE EAST STOPS IS TO SEEK CRUDE
PETROLEUM SUPPLIES AT LOWER PRICE FOR MALTA THAN CRUDE
NOW BEING FURNISHED BY LIBYA (WHICH MASS BERNUCCI
BELEIVES MALTA IS PAYING \$13.34 PER BARREL).

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2. PRESENCE OF PRESIDENT OF NEW AIR MALTA , ALBERT MIZZI,

INDICATES MINTOFF WILL ALSO BE DISCUSSING AIR COMMUNICATIONS
BETWEEN MALTA AND MIDDLE EAST.

3. MASSA BERNUCCI SAID HE WAS ASKED BY PRIME MINISTER'S
PRIVATE SECRETARY ON 24 HOUR NOTICE TO ARRANGE FOR
MEETING BETWEEN MINTOFF AND PRIME MINISTER RUMOR DURING
5 HOUR STOPOVER IN ROME JAN 31. AFTER CONSIDERABLE EFFORT,
MASSA BERNUCCI WAS ONLY ABLE TO COMMIT TUMOR FOR
TENMINUTE VISIT BY MINTOFF, AND THAT MUCH ONLY IF PLANE ARRIVES ON
SCHEDEULE.

4. COMMENT: WHILE WE HAVE NO MEANS OF ASSESSING
MINTOFF'S CHANCE OF SUCCESS IN SEEKING CHEAPER OIL,
HIS VISIT TO CAIRO WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY INCLUDE
DISCUSSIONS ON SUEZ CANAL REOPENING. THIS IS POINT OF
HIGH INTEREST TO MINTOFF SINCE FUNCTIONING CANAL COULD
PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT BUSINESS FOR MALTA'S MAJOR INDUSTRY--
DRYDOCK AND SHIP REPAIR. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER
MORETON ALSO BELIEVES MINTOFF WILL BE EXPLORING
POSSIBILITY OF ACTING AS MEDIATOR BEWTEEN SADAT AND
KHADAFI IN EFFORT TO FIRM UP RELATIONS BETWEEN LIBYA
AND EGYPT. MASSA BERNUCCI NOTED THAT WHILE HE WAS
TALKING WITH MINTOFF'S PRIVATE SECRETARY AT NOON
JAN 30, LIBYAN CHARGE WAS MEETING WITH MINTOFF,
PROBABLY ON MESSAGE TO OR FROM KHADAFI RELATED TO CAIRO
VISIT.

5. MINTOFF TRIP IS REFLECTION OF HIS CURRENT DOMESTIC
DIFFICULTIES ARISING FROM DRAMATIC PRICE RISE IN
PETROLEUM PRODUCTS AS WELL AS SHORTAGES OTHER CONSUMER
ITEMS. GETZ

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